



CITY COUNCIL

Administrative Oversight and Land Use Committee

**Monday, September 15, 2008
Meeting Report**

Attendance: S. Marmarou, J. Waltman, M. Baez, V. Spencer

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, B. McShane

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 pm by S. Marmarou, Chair.

ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT

I. Interviews

Paul Sewell (reappointment – Zoning Hearing Board)

Mr. Sewell did not keep his appointment.

Ms. Katzenmoyer reviewed the information discovered during the routine background check during the appointment/reappointment process. The information was discovered and disclosed to Mr. Sewell in February. It was suggested that he make arrangements to clear up the issues at that time. No progress has been made since February.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed not to recommend the reappointment of Mr. Sewell to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Dennis Straub (appointment – alternate, Animal Control Board)

Mr. Marmarou noted Mr. Straub's community involvement over many years. Mr. Straub indicated that he is a life-long City resident.

Mr. Marmarou requested an explanation of the position. Ms. Katzenmoyer reviewed the need for the Animal Rescue League to have two representatives on the Board. She indicated that Mr. Straub would be placed in an alternate position.

Mr. Straub noted his hope that the City would begin the use of a trap, neuter, and release program for feral cats rather than euthanasia. There was discussion of this strategy and its possible implementation.

Mr. Straub noted his displeasure at Magisterial District Justices for not enforcing animal issues.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed to recommend the appointment of Mr. Straub as an alternate to the Animal Control Board.

Mr. Bill McShane was present to discuss the PRD zoning overlay. He noted his belief that this issue was on this evening's agenda for discussion. He noted the importance of this issue and the delays in the process.

Mr. Spencer informed Mr. McShane that the City just received the recommendations of revisions of the Berks County Planning Commission. Council has not yet received the final version of the PRD and cannot take action until that time.

There was a discussion of the process for zoning amendments.

Mr. McShane thanked Council for their work in moving this project forward.

Ermete Raffaelli (reappointment – Planning Commission)

Mr. Waltman noted Mr. Raffaelli's 20 years of service on this Commission. He noted the many controversial projects reviewed.

Mr. Raffaelli noted the current controversy with United Corrstacks. He noted his lack of support for the second stack that will bring an additional 300 – 500 trucks per day into that facility. This project is a trash to steam facility in disguise.

Mr. Marmarou noted that Council realizes the Commission is looking out for what's best for the community.

Mr. Raffaelli indicated that the Mayor wishes more young people and minorities to serve on the Commission. He noted that most people don't stay on this Commission for a long period of time as much work is required. He is trying to recruit.

Mr. Raffaelli noted the lack of legal support that the Commission currently has. He indicated that the Commission sent a letter to Council President Spencer requesting the ability to hire outside

legal counsel. They have had no response. He indicated that he would suggest David Kozloff. The Committee requested that this issue be discussed at an upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting.

Mr. Waltman requested that the Planning Commission inform Council of large and controversial issues.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed to recommend the reappointment of Mr. Raffaelli to the Planning Commission.

Elizabeth Stanley (reappointment – Charter Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Ms. Stanley enjoyed serving on this Board. Ms. Stanley indicated that she did.

Mr. Waltman questioned if this Board is challenging. Ms. Stanley indicated that it was.

The Committee informed Ms. Stanley that they felt the Charter Board is performing well. There are many issues to clarify. Ms. Stanley described the Board's missions of interpreting, reinforcing, and enforcing the Charter. They are also charged with issuing advisory opinions and education.

Mr. Marmarou questioned what Ms. Stanley saw as needing clarification. Ms. Stanley noted the residency issue as a point of contention. She noted the Board's work to interpret the intent of the writers of the Charter. Ms. Stanley noted the Board works well together and trusts one another's judgment.

Mr. Waltman questioned if Ms. Stanley believed Council complies with the Charter. Ms. Stanley indicated that Council has many and strong powers given them by the Charter which they do not regularly exercise.

The Committee commended the Board for their integrity and work to remain nonpartisan.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed to recommend the reappointment of Ms. Stanley to the Charter Board.

The Administrative Oversight Committee adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk